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CHRON

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE - GDS~~~~INFORMATION~~

August 4, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: SECRETARY KISSINGER
 FROM: CLINTON E. GRANGER
 SUBJECT: Military Balance in the Far East

Basic force levels and situation assessments for the Far East are contained in the annexes, as follows:

ANNEXSino-Soviet

- Sino-Soviet Area of Confrontation A
- Sino-Soviet Air Dispositions (Map) B
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ON-FILE NSC RELEASE
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE - GDS~~

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PRC

Soviet and PRC Military Forces

	SOVIET		PRC	
	Total		Soviet Far East ^{1/}	
	Operational	Not Operational	Operational	Not Operational
I. Strategic				
A. Missiles				
ICBM	1401	220 ^{2/}	(200)	0-1 ^{3/}
IRBM	87		(41)	30-35
MRBM	496		(12)	25-35
SRBM				5-10
B. Naval				
Submarines	78 ^{4/}	16	(28) ^{4/}	5
Launchers	800 ^{4/}	236	(258) ^{4/}	60
C. Air				
Long-Range A/C	195		(84)	
Medium-Range A/C	650		(136)	
Backfire A/C	155 ^{5/}			74
D. Air Defense				
PVO Interceptors	2570		(611)	

1. Includes four military districts and Mongolia.
2. Includes launchers at reduced readiness, under construction, or being modified.
3. 3,200 nm range missile cannot reach continental US.
4. Includes units on sea-trials or undergoing repair.
5. Includes some six Backfires subordinate to the Long Range Air Training Division.

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	<u>SOVIET</u>	<u>PRC</u>
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Far East¹</u>
II. Conventional		
A. Ground Forces		
Combat units		
Tank Div.	49	(4)
Motorized Rifle Div.	111	(38)
Airborne	7	-
Artillery	-	22
AAA	-	15
Combat Equipment		
Tanks & assault guns	48,500	(12,850)
APCs	25,000	(8,000)
Artillery	-	14,000
AA guns	-	6,500
B. Naval		
Major surface ships	219	(58)
Minor surface ships	1,023	(238)
Amphibious	83	(20)
Attack subs	253	(80)
Aircraft		
Strike/Recce	595	(170)
ASW	150	(55)
Helicopters	265	(80)
Transports	115	(20)
C. Air		
Air Defense	1,953	(360)
Ground Attack	1,842	(578)
Reconnaissance	812	(231)
Transport (planes & helos)	3,500	-
Trainers	-	850

¹/ Includes four military districts and Mongolia.

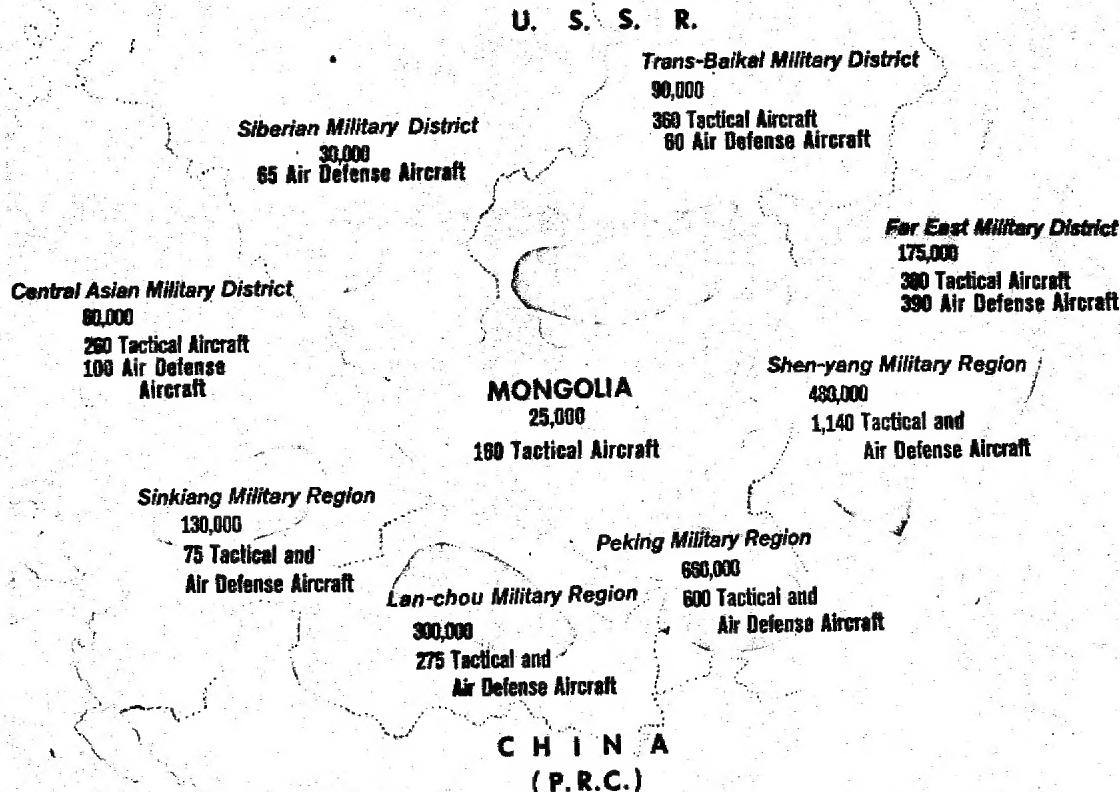
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BALANCES OF FORCES ON THE SINO SOVIET BORDER

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Soviet and

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USSR

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Ground Forces	1,810,000*	3,510,000*
Air Forces	496,000	431,800
Naval Forces	372,000	278,000
Strategic Rocket Troops	397,000	90,000-150,000
Air Defense Forces	559,000	
MOD Command & Support	786,000	
TOTAL	4,420,000	4,309,800-4,369,800
Non-MOD Security Forces	335,000	
GRAND TOTAL	4,755,000	

*Five days after mobilization the USSR would have approximately 3,000,000 men mobilized in the ground forces. [redacted] could have approximately 6,000,000 within 15 to 30 days.

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Sino-Soviet Assessment

The military situation along the Sino-Soviet border continues to be relatively stable. Some sources report occasional clashes between Soviet and Chinese forces along the border and earlier this year the Soviets complained of Chinese provocations. We have, however, no direct evidence of unusual Chinese activity along the border.

The Soviet buildup of forces on the border seems to have peaked in the late 1960s and the major part of the Chinese response to that buildup was completed by late 1970. Since then, both nations have slowly added to forces in the border regions, but at present neither side could launch or maintain a major offensive without reinforcements. As one example of this gradual upgrading, the Soviets are now delivering the advanced Fencer light bomber to tactical air units in the Far East Military District.

Soviet forces on the ground are postured generally for both offensive and defensive operations. Chinese forces are better suited for the defense. Not surprisingly, the Chinese have the advantage in manpower, the Soviets in critical categories of weapons.

Measuring the Sino-Soviet balance in terms of real combat potential is not easy. By any standard measure the Soviets enjoy clear superiority. But standard measures are hard to apply to the Sino-Soviet balance. First of all, despite its very small size and very slow growth, the Chinese nuclear force probably presents a form of minimum deterrence against Soviet attack because it would be hard to destroy with confidence in a lightning attack . . . this, at least, is the way the Soviets appear to see it and that is what counts. Second, while the Soviets enjoy military superiority in land combat forces, it is hard to see them defeating China in the common sense of the word except at very great cost over a long period of time. We know little about the strategies that either side would apply in an actual conflict. And much would depend on how it came about. But judging from military capabilities and expressed doctrine on each side we conclude that in the event of conflict:

-- The Chinese would attempt to hold Soviet ground forces with their own forward conventional forces, backed by a form of widespread unconventional or people's war. They might refrain from using any surviving nuclear weapons against Soviet civilian targets in the hopes of restraining Soviet use of nuclear weapons.

-- The Soviets would attempt to prevent local Chinese incursions into their territory, to defeat Chinese main force units with operations as shallow into China as possible, and to bombard China out of the war from the air, probably with nuclear weapons.

If the Soviets conceived of their conflict objective as driving the Chinese out of the war but not defeating and occupying all of China, we believe the Soviets would win such a war. But they in no way relish the prospect. While there is ample possibility for explosive crisis on the Sino-Soviet frontier, perhaps growing out of post-Mao political struggles, we do not see either side as having a near-term incentive to provoke a major conflict.

The main Soviet military objective on the Sino-Soviet border, in our view, is to maintain a posture suitable for what we might call "active containment." That is, it would be fully adequate to deter and, if necessary, to defeat provocative Chinese military actions on the border, but also sufficiently superior and offensive in character to exert a constant influence over Chinese foreign policy and also, to an extent, in Chinese internal affairs. The Soviets do not expect much in the way of improvement in their relations with China. But they continue to hope that some improvement could be obtained under a new leadership. Their military forces are designed both to guard against the prospect of continued Sino-Soviet hostility but also to help persuade new Chinese leaders that it would be better for them to seek improved relations with Moscow.

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FACT SHEET

Subject: US, USSR, and PRC Forces in Asia (U)

1. (U) The attached spread sheet provides a summary of current US, USSR, and PRC combatant forces in Asia (Notional).
2. (S) The following significant trends in force deployments in Asia have occurred since the beginning of 1972:

a. US

- Conducted a major force withdrawal from Southeast Asia.
- Strategic air (B-52s) reduced from a high of 205 aircraft to 14 aircraft.
- WESTPAC carrier deployments reduced from six to three.
- Tactical air (including AC, 130 gunships) reduced from high of nearly 500 land-based aircraft to 128.
- All ground forces withdrawn from SE Asia.
- Increased US Naval presence in the Indian Ocean, with one deployment per quarter (average).
- Moved forward on buildup of Diego Garcia to support Indian Ocean deployments.

b. USSR

- Maintained relatively stable force levels.
- Air capabilities increased through modernization and qualitative improvements.
- 10% increase in number of ASW aircraft.
- Improved air-surface missile capabilities.
- Soviet SSBN deployments have increased.

Classified by Director, J-5
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO
YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED ON DECEMBER 31 1983

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- Out-of-area deployments of major surface combatants to the Indian Ocean continues.
- Ground forces continue to show qualitative improvement.
- ICBMs, improvements through MRV/MIRVing, silo hardening, and increased accuracy.

c. PRC

- Ground forces estimated to number over 3.5 million:
 - Nearly one half (1.6 million) stationed in four MRs bordering the USSR and Mongolia.
 - Rate of total strength increase is leveling off.
 - Qualitative improvements in equipment, organization and training have been occurring and are expected to continue.
- Navy remains equipped and trained to carry out its highly specialized role as a coastal defense force.
 - A nuclear powered submarine building program is under way but has experienced difficulties.
- The deployment of the CSSX-3 (limited range-ICBM) is limited, one silo is completed, one is nearing completion, a third is a possibility.

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MILITARY FORCES

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A. GROUND

Personnel Strength
Army (Current/M+30) 325,000/350,000

Combat Units

Infantry Divisions	18/20
Armored Infantry Brigades	1
Armor Brigades	3
Airborne Brigades	2

Combat Equipment

Tanks, Medium	160
Tanks, Light	940
APCs	250
Assault Guns	215
Artillery	1,500
AA Guns	300
Air Defense Missiles	300

B. NAVAL

Personnel Strength (Current/+30) 68,000/90,000

Navy	35,000/42,000
Marines	33,000/48,000

Ships

Destroyers & Destroyer	21
Escorts	
Submarines	2
Patrol	22
Other	122

C. AIR FORCE

Personnel Strength 72,000
Aircraft (Total/Operational) 598/460*

Fighters	305
F-104	64
F-100	91
F-5	58
F-86 (used as trainers)	51
T-33 & T-38	41

*Does not include 144 aircraft of the Army and Navy

NOTE:

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C. AIR FORCE (continued)

[Redacted]

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Transports	103
Helicopters	13
Utility	39

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~~SECRET~~
~~NO FOREIGN DISSEM~~KOREAN MILITARY BALANCEComparison of Forces

25X1

A. GROUNDPersonnel Strength

Army	408,000	527,000
Reserves	1.3 million	2.5 million

Combat UnitsInfantry and Mechanized

Infantry Divisions	23	18
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Armored Divisions	2	0
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Infantry Brigades	2	0
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Armored Brigades	0	2
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Armored Regiments	7	0
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Airborne Brigades	0	3
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Airborne Battalions	5	0
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Marine Corps Divisions	0	1
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Combat Equipment

Tanks	1,500-1,700	800
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Assault guns	60-100	0
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Artillery pieces	2,650	2,160
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B. NAVALPersonnel Strength

Ship Types	25,000	41,900
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Destroyer and Destroyer Escort	2	10
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Submarines	9	0
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Guided Missile Patrol Boats	18	0
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Amphibious-related craft	60	93
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Other Patrol Boats	270-300	32
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C. AIRPersonnel Strength

Total Aircraft	44,400	28,500
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Fighters - subsonic	920	850
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Fighters - supersonic	250-300	101
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Bombers	230-240	100
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Bombers	8.6	0
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Transports, helicopters,	295	600
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utility aircraft		
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Surface-to-air missile launchers		
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Anti-aircraft artillery pieces		
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~~SECRET~~~~NO FOREIGN DISSEM~~

~~TOP SECRET / SENSITIVE~~Assessment of Military Balance on Korean Peninsula*

The factors that have restrained [redacted] from launching major hostilities continue to do so. These are the US-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty, the presence of US troops, the lack of an across the board superiority over ROK forces, especially if they are supported by US tactical air and naval elements, and the need for support from either Moscow or Peking in a sustained, large-scale conflict.

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On the ground, the South has the numerical advantage while the North has the edge in combat units, firepower, and armor. Each is capable of penetrating the frontline defenses of the other, but neither is capable of overrunning and holding targets deep within the territory of the other.

[redacted] is clearly superior to that of the South in terms of ships in active service, readiness, and firepower. [redacted] because of its missile boats and submarines, can effectively neutralize any purely South Korean naval threat.

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The air forces of both Koreas are well trained and in a high state of readiness. [redacted] have the numerical edge in aircraft and perhaps the better air defense system. The South Koreans have the qualitative advantage in aircraft and have more proficient pilots. At this time neither side appears able to neutralize the other's air force nor gain air superiority over the other's territory.

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* Assessment based on North vs. South only.

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SECRET**FORCE COMPARISON
(NOTIONAL)**

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Air

Bombers	14	120	75
Naval Air	520	170	650
Fighter	360	1700	4800

Naval

Carriers	8	0	0
Submarines			0 ^{1/}
(Ballistic Mx)	9	27	
(Attack)	35	80	66
Major Combatants	76	56	21

Ground

Divisions	3	40	267
Tanks	250	7100	10500
Artillery	220	3000	24800

Strategic Missiles

IICBM	0	200	1
MRBM	0	0	30
IRBM	0	0	30
SILBM	144	218	0

^{1/} Under development**SECRET**

MILITARY FORCES

Cambodia

A. GROUND

Personnel Strength	60,000-70,000
Artillery 105 and 155mm	274

B. NAVAL

River Patrol Boats	60
Coastal Patrol Boats	17-19
Sub Chaser	1

C. AIR

T-28s	Approx. 100
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NOTE: Accurate current information on the status, composition, and disposition of the Cambodian armed forces is almost totally lacking.

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MILITARY FORCES

25X1

A. GROUND

Personnel Strength	
Army (Current/M+5)	200,000/200,000
Civil Defense	25,000/25,000
Combat Units (Current/M+5)	
Independent Brigades	17/17
Combat Equipment	
Tanks, Medium	0
Tanks, Light	176
APC	565

B. NAVAL

Personnel Strength (Current/M+5)	38,500/38,500
Ship Type*	
Destroyer	8/9
Submarine	3/3
Patrol/Missile Equipped	8/8
Patrol	18/38
Mine Warfare	9/13
Amphibious Warfare Craft	10/11
Auxiliaries	18/21

C. AIR

Personnel Strength (Current/M+5)	28,000/28,000
Total Aircraft*	178/239
Fighters	42/42
F-51	11/11
T-33	16/16
Avon Sabre	15/15
Transports	59/59
Helicopters	23/23
Trainers	49/49

* The first figure represents number of units operationally assigned; the second number represents total in inventory.

Note: [redacted]

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SECRET
NO FOREIGN DISSEM

NO FOREIGN DISSEM**MILITARY FORCES**Japan**A. GROUND**

Personnel Strength	155,000
Combat Units	
Armies	5
Infantry Divisions	13
Mechanized Divisions	1
Airborne Brigades	1
Artillery Battalions	13
Tank Brigades	1
Combat Equipment	
Tanks - medium	563
Tanks - light	69
APCS	866
Artillery Pieces	1,356

B. NAVAL

Personnel Strength	37,000
Ship Types	
Destroyer and Destroyer Escort	47
Submarine	15
Other Naval craft	290

C. AIR

Personnel Strength	42,000
Total Aircraft	947
Fighters	
F-86	253
F-104	168
F-4	40
RF-86	15
T-33	167
Transports and other aircraft	294

SECRET**NO FOREIGN DISSEM**

MILITARY FORCES

Laos

A. GROUND

National Army

PL	33,000
FAR	46,000 (Being demobilized or integrated into PL forces)

B. NAVAL

Insignificant

*Note: Reliable current information on the Laotian military forces
is lacking.*

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NO FOREIGN DISSEM**MILITARY FORCES**

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A. GROUND

Personnel Strength	
Army (Current/M+5)	51,500/51,500
Special Services	1,200/1,200
Combat Units (Current/M+5)	
Independent Battalions	33/33
Combat Equipment	
Armored Cars	334
Scout Cars	600
APC	140

B. NAVAL

Personnel Strength (Current/M+5)	4,500/4,500
Ship Type*	
Destroyer	1
Patrol	27/34
Mine Warfare	6
Amphibious Warfare Ships	1
Amphibious Warfare Craft	20/24
Auxiliaries	2

C. AIR

Personnel Strength (Current/M+5)	5,000/5,000
Total Aircraft*	135/136
Fighters	43/43
CL-41G	20/20
Avon-Sabre	15/15
F-5s	8/8
Transports	33/33
Helicopters	39/39
Trainers	14/14

* The first figure represents number of units operationally assigned; the second number represents total in inventory.

Note:

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MILITARY FORCES

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A. GROUND

Personnel Strength	36,000/36,000
Army (Current/M+5)	223
Home Defense Force	
Combat Units (Current/M+5)	
Armored Cavalry Troop	1
Infantry Division	3
Independent Brigades	2
Combat Equipment	
Tanks, Medium	0
Tanks, Light	21
APC	35

B. NAVAL

Personnel Strength (Current/M+5)	14,600/14,600
Ship Type*	
Patrol	51/64
Mine Warfare	4/6
Amphibious Warfare Ships	9/11
Amphibious Warfare Craft	2/26
Auxiliaries	9/11

C. AIR

Personnel Strength (Current/M+5)	15,000/15,000
Total Aircraft*	275/294
Fighters	55/55
F-5s	17/17
TD-28s	7/7
T-34s	6/6
F-36	21/21
SF-260	4/4
Transports	74/74
Helicopters	34/34
Trainers	64/64

* The first figure represents number of units operationally assigned; the second number represents total in inventory.

Note:

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NO FOREIGN DISSEMMILITARY FORCES

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A. GROUND

Personnel Strength	12,000/12,000
Army (Current/M+5)	
Combat Units (Current/M+5)	4/4
Independent Brigades	
Ranger Battalion	1/1
Combat Equipment	0
Tanks, Medium	50
Tanks, Light	
APC	250

B. NAVAL

Personnel Strength (Current/M+5)	1,200/1,200
Ship Type*	
Patrol/Missile Equipped	6/6
Patrol	5/10
Amphibious Warfare Ships	0/1
Amphibious Warfare Craft	4/4
Auxiliaries	1/1

C. AIR

Personnel Strength (Current/M+5)	1,600/1,600
Total Aircraft*	88/106
Fighters	55/55
Hunters	38/38
A-4s	17/17
Transports	6/6
Helicopters	7/7
Trainers	33/33

* The first figure represents number of units operationally assigned; the second number represents total in inventory.

Note:

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MILITARY FORCES

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A. GROUND

Personnel Strength	132,000
Combat Units	
Infantry Divisions	5
Regimental Combat Teams	2
Special Forces Groups	3
Airborne Battalion	1
Aircraft (attached to Ground Forces)	257

B. NAVAL

Personnel Strength	27,000
Ships	
Principal Combatants	7
Medium Patrol/ASW	9
Coastal Patrol Craft	22
River Patrol Craft	28
Other	41
Aircraft (attached to Navy)	29

C. AIR

Personnel Strength	43,000
Aircraft	373

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NO FOREIGN DISSEM**MILITARY FORCES**Vietnam**A. GROUND**

Personnel Strength	380,000-398,000
Combat Units	
Infantry Divisions	27
Independent Infantry Regiments	15
Training Divisions	2
AAA Regiments	55
SAM Regiments	20
Armor Regiments	5
Artillery Regiments	20
Engineer Regiments	14
NVA Sapper Battalions	33

B. NAVAL

Personnel Strength	4,000-8,000
Ships	
Komar class PTG	3
PGM	30
PT/PB	4
PCS	2
Service Craft	50
US and SVN	?

C. AIR

Personnel Strength	10,000-12,000
Aircraft	
MIG 15/17	115
MIG 19	67
MIG 21	68
F-5	75
A-37	113
Transports	139
Helicopters	
Soviet	44
US	469

SECRET**NO FOREIGN DISSEM**

DOD MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTH

	Army	Air Force	Navy Ashore	Navy Afloat	USMC Ashore	USMC Afloat	TOTAL
West Pacific	41,139	35,322	11,989	20,911	25,093	14	134,468
Japan*	5,823	14,826	6,604	4,588	23,586	11	55,438
Philippines	32	9,955	4,630	4,516	1,459	3	20,595
South Korea	34,781	7,110	194	372	37	-	42,494
Taiwan	503	3,431	561	92	11	-	4,598
Other Afloat	-	-	-	11,343	-	-	11,343
Other Pacific	45	377	471	732	61	3,413	5,099
Australia	7	269	374	-	8	-	658
Burma	3	2	1	-	6	-	12
Indonesia	20	38	18	-	18	-	94
Malaysia	5	3	-	-	6	-	14
Singapore	1	8	15	326	6	-	356
Other Afloat	-	-	-	-	-	3,413	3,413

*Includes Okinawa

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